

Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

February 18, 1997

Ms. Anne Harrington
Coordinator
Nonproliferation/Science Cooperation Programs
Bureau of Political and Military Affairs
PM/RNP Room 1480
Department of State
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Ms. Harrington:

The Department of Energy requests a partnership with the International Science and Technology Center (ISTC) to fund projects in the Russian Federation relating to radiation health effects. Our funds for these projects would directly support Russian radiation scientists including scientists from weapons research laboratories.

The Department of Energy is the lead U.S. agency for the Joint Coordinating Committee for Radiation Effects Research (JCCRER), a bilateral government committee representing agencies from the United States and the Russian Federation. Other members from the U.S. side are the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Department of Defense, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

The Russian co-chair for the JCCRER is Dr. Sergei Khetagurov, Vice-Minister of the Ministry for Civil Defense Affairs, Emergencies, and Elimination of consequences of Natural Disasters (EMERCOM). Other Russian members include the Ministry for Atomic Energy (MINATOM), the Ministry of Health and Medical Industry (MINZDRAV), and the Nuclear Safety Institute (IBRAE).

The JCCRER coordinates U.S.- Russian studies of radiation health effects. Feasibility studies carried out for the past two years have confirmed the viability of using data from former Soviet nuclear weapons plants to expand our understanding of the health effects of ionizing radiation. Scientific analyses of these data have the potential to answer vital questions in radiation research that remain unanswered by previous health studies of atomic bomb survivors and nuclear workers in the U.S. and Western Europe.

We are particularly interested in funding projects in the Urals relating to worker, population, and environmental health effects of the Mayak Production Facility. As an adjunct to the scientific studies carried out under the aegis of the JCCRER, we are also interested in funding an effort to microfilm, and thus protect and preserve, valuable records at three sites - the Mayak Production Facility which is under MINATOM, the nearby FIB-1 which is under MINZDRAV, and the Urals

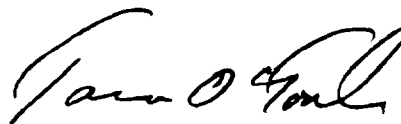


Research Center for Radiation Medicine (URCRM) in Chelayabinsk which is under MINZDRAV and EMERCOM.

Based on the information you have provided us, I believe that working with the ISTC would be an excellent means to move forward all our cooperative efforts with the Russians. In the short run I am asking to partner with you to fund our microfilm preservation effort. In the long run, I believe that all of the work we are doing as part of the JCCRER would potentially fit well with your program.

As the U.S. co-chair, I am looking forward to working with the ISTC. I believe that both of our organizations would benefit from this partnership.

Sincerely,



Tara O'Toole, M.D., M.P.H.
Assistant Secretary
Environment, Safety and Health